

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. **(Currently Amended)** A disposable diaper comprising a liquid permeable topsheet, a liquid impermeable backsheet and three liquid retentive absorbent members interposed between the topsheet and the backsheet,

said three absorbent members being disposed in series in the direction of from the rear portion, through the crotch portion, to the front portion of the diaper, and wherein the length of the three absorbent members descends in the order of the rear portion absorbent member, the front portion absorbent member and the crotch portion absorbent member,

~~an elastic member~~ members being disposed in ~~its~~ a stretched state on both sides of said series of said three absorbent members, such that when said diaper is worn, the elastic members are disposed on the leg portions around the wearer's legs, and wherein the elastic members are disposed longitudinally on both lateral sides of the disposable diaper from the rear portion absorbent member to the front portion absorbent member,

said absorbent members being arranged such that a gap, ~~which~~ wherein said gap extends in a width direction of said diaper, is produced between any adjacent two of said three absorbent members when the diaper is stretched flat and that any adjacent two of said three absorbent members come into close contact with each other when the diaper is worn; and

wherein a boundary between the absorbent members in the rear and crotch portions is positioned at about the middle of the diaper length, and a boundary between the absorbent members in the crotch portion and front portion is slightly before the middle of the diaper length and toward the front of the diaper.

2. (Original) The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein each of said absorbent members comprises a fiber aggregate and/or a superabsorbent polymer,

the opposite side faces of each of said absorbent members which extend in the diaper length direction and the skin-facing surface of each of said absorbent members are covered with a sheet of nonwoven fabric which bridges said absorbent members, and

said nonwoven fabric is water-hydrophilic in a part or the whole of the area covering said skin-facing surface of each of said absorbent members and is water-repellent in the area covering said opposite side faces of each of said absorbent members.

3. (Original) The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein standing gathers are provided on both sides of the diaper along the direction of from the rear portion, through the crotch portion, to the front portion of the diaper, said standing gathers on each side being formed by fixing a standing gather-forming sheet having an elastic member along each of the longer sides of the diaper such that said sheet covers an area of the topsheet inward and outward about each of the longer side edges of the topsheet.

4. (Original) The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein standing gathers are provided on each side of the diaper along the direction of from the rear portion, through the crotch portion, to the front portion, the fixed end of said standing gathers on each side depicting a wavy line, and part of said fixed end depicting a projection toward the widthwise middle of the diaper in the vicinity of the facing corners of any adjacent two of said absorbent members.

5. (Original) The disposable diaper according to claim 4, wherein said part of said fixed end intrudes between said any adjacent two of said absorbent members.